

**State of Montana**  
**REQUEST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS**  
**Montana Department of Natural Resources and**  
**Conservation**  
**FORESTS IN FOCUS – ROUND 3**  
**GRANT PROGRAM**

**SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The STATE OF MONTANA, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, (DNRC) is soliciting proposals for grants totaling One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) for forest restoration and forest fuels reduction projects on non-industrial private, state, and/or tribal lands in Montana. These funds are provided as a component of the “Forests in Focus Initiative,” with authority provided in Sec. 76-13-150 (4) & (9) MCA.

FIF Round 3 will have one grant funding cycle. Proposals must be received by 5:00 PM Friday, September 30, 2016 at the DNRC Forestry Division Headquarters, 2705 Spurgin Rd., Missoula, MT 59804 to be eligible.

**SECTION 2.0 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

**2.1 PROGRAM SCOPE.** Funding is available on a competitive statewide basis, and will be prioritized toward projects that efficiently complete forest restoration and/or forest fuels reduction, while producing commercial forest products.

The maximum individual grant award is two hundred fifty thousand dollars, (\$250,000.00). Applicants may submit multiple project proposals, but only one grant will be awarded to any individual, entity, or corporation. Grants may be awarded in amounts less than the amount applied for. This grant will require a fifteen (15%) cost share contribution.

**2.2 CONTACT INFORMATION.** The primary contact for this program is:

Roger Ziesak  
DNRC Forestry Division, Forestry Assistance Bureau  
2705 Spurgin Rd, Missoula, MT 59804  
Telephone Number: 406-542-4338, Cell 406-239-9881  
Fax Number: 406-542-4217  
E-mail Address: rziesak@mt.gov

Questions regarding the process outlined in this RFGP should be directed to Roger Ziesak, or to Service Foresters located at DNRC field offices.

**2.3 PUBLIC OUTREACH.** One public meeting is scheduled to clarify program requirements and answer questions about this solicitation:

DNRC Forestry Division Main Office, Missoula on Sept 14, 2016. The meeting will run from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. Conference phone lines will be available upon request.

## **2.4 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

<b>Due Date &amp; Time:</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 30, 2016 (received by 5:00 pm)</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Delivery and Mailing Address:</b>  MT Dept of Natural Resources and Conservation ATTN: Roger Ziesak 2705 Spurgin Rd Missoula, MT 59804-3199
<b>Comments:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One <u>complete</u> copy of each proposal is required.</li><li>• Incomplete proposals or those received after the deadline will be disqualified.</li><li>• Paper, faxed, or electronic proposals are acceptable.</li><li>• It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm receipt by DNRC of the complete proposal by the deadline.</li></ul>

**2.5 GRANT AGREEMENT DURATION.** Grants awarded under this program will expire on December 31, 2017. Extensions will be granted at DNRC's sole discretion. If approved, a single extension, (up to a maximum of 12 months), will be granted.

## **SECTION 3.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

**3.1 PROPOSAL.** Each proposal must include the following information:

- a) **Contact Information of Primary Applicant** – Include address, daytime phone number(s), business phone, FAX number, and email address.
- b) **Itemized Grant Request:**
  - a. Total grant amount requested.
  - b. Total cost share amount provided.
  - c. List payment unit(s) Name, Size (acres), Grant and Cost Share amounts for each. Maximum number of five payment units.
- c) **Maps** - provide map(s) that clearly show proposed harvest units, land ownership, property boundaries, existing roads, new road construction or reconstruction, important streams, and types of treatments.
- d) **Description of proposed treatments** – Proposals should describe in complete detail the treatment plan for each payment unit, including: what the forest stand(s) currently look like; type(s) of treatment; harvest prescription(s), harvest system(s), leave tree species, leave tree spacing, type of leave tree spacing-between crowns or between stems; and forest fuels treatment(s) such as understory treatments. Photos may be used as a part of this description.

- e) **Post-treatment conditions** - A clear, concise description of what the forest stands will look like after treatment is completed (for example: distance between trees or between crowns for overstory and understory, etc.). This description will be the basis for final inspection before payment is approved. It is the Applicant's responsibility to make sure the write-up is easily understandable when comparing the description to the completed work. The completed work must match your proposal's post-treatment description.
- f) **List** estimated volumes of each type of forest product that will be produced.
- g) **Operating Schedule-** Show the approximate start and stop dates for the operation, and for each major portion thereof. Show how you plan to complete all activities, including slash treatment, by December 31, 2017.
- h) **Property Description – Provide** name and address of landowner(s) involved in the project, written proof of landowner cooperation, and a legal description of lands to be treated.
- i) **Cost Information** - Proposals must include the following information for each payment unit. **All costs must be listed on a per acre basis.**
  - i. Preparation Costs - includes administrative and lay-out cost.
  - ii. Commercial Treatment Cost –logging and mobilization/demobilization costs.
  - iii. Non-commercial Treatment Cost – includes mobilization/demobilization costs and slash treatment.
  - iv. Road construction/reconstruction/obliteration and/or stream improvement costs.
  - v. Transportation Costs – haul costs to each specific mill or delivery point.
  - vi. Total number of jobs this proposal will create or sustain.

Costs, as they relate to the work being performed, are an important part of this RFGP. Costs must be reasonable and practical. Proposals with incomplete cost information may be disqualified.

**Cost Share Contribution – This grant will require a fifteen (15%) cost share contribution.** This can be met through in-kind or cash contributions. Describe how the cost-share requirement will be met. If all or part is through in-kind services then detail those costs as part of your proposal as they must be identified separately from the grant funding request.

- j) **Partnerships** – Identify all sub-contractors, landowners, and partners who will participate in the project, and their responsibilities. Project logger/operator must provide information on any relevant qualifications, certifications, and skills relevant to being the on-the-ground project lead.
- k) **References** - Proposals must include at least two complete references where the applicant or the Project logger/operator has completed forest management projects similar to those listed in the proposal. Company profiles are also acceptable.

### **3.2 QUALIFIED TREATMENTS.**

- a) Forest restoration and/or fuels reduction through commercial timber harvest;
- b) Improvement of soil and/or water quality or wildlife habitat;
- c) Utilization of commercial forest products. List what will be harvested/sold, including: sawlogs, pulp logs, chips, posts & poles, firewood, shavings, landscape mulch, and/or hogfuel;
- d) New road construction, re-construction, or road obliteration is allowed when required for successful project implementation, **provided combined costs for these line items do not exceed 10% of the total project cost;**
- e) Stream restoration, fisheries enhancement, prescribed burning, and/or noxious weed treatments are allowed **provided combined costs for these line items do not exceed 10% of the total project cost.**

## **SECTION 4.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4.1 ELIGIBILITY.**

- a) Proposals should treat forested lands that have not been treated in the last ten years, unless those forests are currently affected by insects, fire, or other damaging agents.
- b) Projects granted to state and tribal entities are permitted to bid out the designated project after award. Grant amount cannot be changed if successful bids are higher than estimates.
- c) Project must be feasible and utilize the most efficient and cost effective methods for harvesting timber on a given landscape.
- d) Projects utilizing operators who are accredited through professional organizations including, but not limited to, the Society of American Foresters or the Montana Logging Association will receive preference points, (up to 10 points), during project scoring.
- e) Contractors/Operators that are business entities must be registered to do business in Montana.
- f) **DNRC State Trust Lands are not eligible for grants.** Other State Agencies that own and manage forest lands may be eligible at their discretion.

**4.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST.** It is the policy of the DNRC that all employees carry out their duties for the benefit of the people of the state, and in accordance with the department of Administration State Ethics Policy #03-0180. Further, employees must follow “An Employee’s Guide to Standards of Conduct in Montana State Government (March 2011)”.

**4.3 SCORING CRITERIA.** Scoring will be based on the following categories: Work Plan, Project Timeline, Funding Request, Partnerships, and References. Up to 10 bonus points may be awarded based on applicable operator accreditations.

**4.4 OWNERSHIP OF REMOVED MATERIAL.** All wood products removed from private lands are property of the applicant and/or landowner. DNRC will neither acquire nor retain an interest in any private, agency or tribal forest products generated.

### **4.5 ADDITIONAL TREATMENT SPECIFICATIONS.**

- a) **Slash Treatment** – The Applicant will treat all slash generated by the project in accordance with the state slash hazard (Hazard Reduction Act, or “HRA”) law.
- b) **Protection of Resources** - All treatments must conform to the Montana Best Management Practices for Timber Harvest and comply with the Montana Streamside Management Zone Law and Rules .

**4.6 APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES.** Applicants must secure provision of all equipment, manpower, materials, permits, and permissions required to accomplish the work as described in their proposal.

A final report must be submitted prior to final acceptance, payment and closure of the grant agreement. It must include:

- a) Volumes of wood products delivered;
- b) Revised, if necessary, map showing work completed;
- c) Detailed description of how the cost-share requirement was met;
- d) Pictures of the project (if any);
- e) Management objectives accomplished;
- f) Significant issues, such as changes that needed to be made;
- g) Number of direct jobs the project sustained.

**4.7 DNRC RESPONSIBILITIES.** DNRC will act as Project Administrator, with the following responsibilities:

- a) Provide clarification of grant agreement requirements during project implementation;
- b) Conduct inspection of completed treatment areas and payment units;
- c) Process all payments to the applicant upon approval of payment units;
- d) Provide written approval and acceptance of pay units and of final acceptance of project.

## **SECTION 5.0 PAYMENTS**

**5.1 PAYMENT SCHEDULE.** Payments will be made following inspection of each payment unit and approval of payment unit treatments by a DNRC representative. Total number of payments associated with each award is limited to five (5).

**5.2 PERFORMANCE BOND.** DNRC will withhold seven and one half percent (7.5%) of each payment as a performance bond, not to exceed Eighteen Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$18,750.00). This performance bond will be retained by DNRC until the project is one-hundred percent (100%) completed and approved, upon which time DNRC will pay such performance bond to successful grant applicants.